

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 120429 TOSEC 010238

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DRAFTED BY S/PRS:IPERNICK:SM

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING, MAY 22, 1975

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM FUNSETH (S/PRS)

NO. 12

LAOS AGAIN WAS SUBJECT OF MOST QUESTIONS AT TODAY'S BRIEFING.

FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF ACTING SPOKESMAN FUNSETH'S RESPONSES:

1. LAOS

A. SAVANNAKHET: EMBASSY VIENTIANE JUST INFORMED US THAT AS A RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN MININT'S PARTY AND DEMONSTRATORS, TWO EMBASSY PLANES WENT TO SAVANNAKHET MAY 22 EVENING LOCAL TIME AND FLEW 12 AMERICANS AND 2 FOREIGN NATIONALS TO UDORN.

B. VIENTIANE: EMBASSY REPORTS NO NEW INCIDENTS IN PAST 24 HOURS. HOWEVER, 150-200 DEMONSTRATORS STILL OCCUPY AID COMPOUND AND OTHERS CONTINUE TO OCCUPY AN AID WAREHOUSE AREA. ADDITIONALLY, ENTRY/EXIT TO AMERICAN HOUSING AREA IS RESTRICTED. EMBASSY REPORTS NO VIOLENCE DIRECTED AGAINST AMERICANS. ASKED WHETHER RATHER LAX ATTITUDE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 120429 TOSEC 010238

POLICE HAS CHANGED, FUNSETH SAID CONTINUED STUDENT OCCUPA-

TION WOULD INDICATE IT HAS NOT. ON REDUCTION OF AMERICAN STAFF, PEOPLE WILL BE FLOWN FROM VIENTIANE BY COMMERCIAL MEANS (INCLUDING CHARTERS). ASKED WHETHER WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT PANIC IF AMERICANS BEGIN TO LEAVE AS IN THE SAIGON SITUATION, FUNSETH SAID THE SITUATION IN VIENTIANE IS NOT COMPARABLE. EMBASSY HAS NOT INFORMED US HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE LEFT.

(C) US AID PROGRAM: WE ARE IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH RLG OFFICIALS ON THE QUESTION OF AID. WE ASSUME OUR CHARGE AND AID DIRECTOR ARE EXPLAINING ALL FACETS OF US AID TO THE RLG. AID CONTINUES BUT, AS STATED PREVIOUSLY, AT A RESTRICTED LEVEL. FUNSETH DECLINED TO PREDICT HOW LONG THESE DISCUSSIONS ON AID WOULD LAST OR TO SPECULATE ON FUTURE OF AID PROGRAM IN LAOS.

2. KIDNAPPING IN TANZANIA -- WE STILL DO NOT KNOW THE WHEREABOUTS, NUMBERS, IDENTITY, OR MOTIVES OF THE KIDNAPERS. TANGOV IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN TRYING TO LOCATE THEM, AND HAS ASKED GOVTS OF ZAIRE, BURUNDI, AND ZAMBIA TO COOPERATE. TANZANIAN FONMIN HAS EXPRESSED TO OUR AMBASSADOR DEEP CONCERN AND REGRETS OF HIS GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE ASKED OUR AMBASSADORS IN KINSHASA AND BUJUMBURA TO APPROACH GOVERNMENTS OF ZAIRE AND BURUNDI TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION IN THE SEARCH. ADDITIONALLY, TWO FSO'S WITH EXTENSIVE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE HAVE PROCEEDED TO THE KIDNAPPING SITE.

3. WHEREABOUTS OF GRAHAM MARTIN -- BELIEVE HE IS VACATIONING IN EUROPE.

4. LETTER TO PRESIDENT FROM 76 SENATORS ON AID TO ISRAEL -- REFERRED TO WHITE HOUSE.

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